

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY ABILITY...

Challenging stigma associated with
learning disabilities through creative writing



Welcome to Let me tell you about my ability...

Hello,

This community psychology project was created by the Mental Health of Learning Disability team (MHLD) as a way to celebrate people with a learning disability. Our hope was to offer a platform for individuals who have a learning disability to share their wisdom and achievements as well as the challenges and barriers that society can place on their path.

In our last edition (June 2023), we shared the stories of two individuals with Learning Disability (LD), told through the eyes of their loved ones, which was inspirational and deeply moving. In this issue, we're shining a light on the individuals behind the scenes, as well as on the frontline. Today, we are proudly celebrating paid workers who work tirelessly to support and advocate for their clients with LD.

Passionate and dedicated workers are holding a beacon of hope for a world where difference is perceived as a valuable part of human diversity and is not considered to be less than. Access to health and social care should not be based on privilege, power, IQ or risk. It should be needs led. We want to offer opportunities for real growth and development in whatever way is meaningful to the person.

All the testimonials you read in this edition are verbatim accounts based on a recent survey sent to community LD teams, MHLD colleagues, local charity workers and day services staff working with adults with LD in Kent. 30 responses were received and each relay a message filled with feelings of gratitude for the privilege of bearing witness to their clients' skills and resilience, contagious joy and appreciation for the little wins in life. Many respondents also highlighted that an important part of their role is advocating for equality and social justice and celebrating the richness of our differences, whatever these are.

So, let's celebrate the LD workers behind the name badge: the LD community and hospital liaison nurses, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, dieticians, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, positive behaviour therapy practitioners, mental health LD nurses, LD psychiatrists and the

incredible LD admin team. All of the dedicated support workers at day services and supported living, personal assistants, advocates, befrienders and volunteers. The LD university tutors and researchers and anyone else that goes the extra mile to make a difference in the lives of people who have a learning disability.

A heartfelt thank you

Aggie Moreno-Lopez

We asked, you answered

We asked people who work with clients with a learning disability two questions. We did not know how many people would respond, but we were so pleased to have many responses from nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, doctors, psychologists, support workers, charity workers, team leaders, care managers, academic tutors, trainees and more. Thank you to everyone who took the time to reply – your responses were excellent.

The tree of LD

We asked people who work with clients with LD to complete these sentence : “I support people with a learning disability to live a better quality of life by....”
And these were their answers:



Another key part of the tree of life is the fruit that grows upon the tree. The fruits on our tree represent the gifts that others have given us. We asked staff members: what people with a learning disability have given to them in their lives. Inside the fruit below, are their responses.



It's important to highlight that whilst we work with and for people with learning disabilities, our clients also work with and for us. As you can see from our fruit, clients bring so many gifts to our work and our lives. These fruits come from the excellent work that staff do, and we wanted to make sure we celebrate all of the wonderful people in our community.

[Take a look at our project information sheet](#)

[Take a look at our participant information sheet](#)

[Take a look at our easy read participant sheet](#)

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition: **Aggie, Danielle, Ella, Jessa, Iiris, Emily.** *With Special thanks to Charlotte, Jordan, Caitlin Davies and Georgie Grassom.*

If you have lived experience of a learning disability and would like to submit a poem or piece of artwork for a future publication, please contact us at kmpt.mhld.communitypsychologyproject@nhs.net



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Albion Place Medical Centre, 23-29 Albion Place, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5TS

We'd love to hear what you think.

If you have any feedback about econnect that you would like to share, please contact the learning disability team at kmpt.mhld.communitypsychologyproject@nhs.net

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